Claims 6 relates to an image processing method for an image processing apparatus which has an optical area in which a number of elements are disposed in a matrix. The method includes the steps of receiving light introduced into the elements of the optical area and photoelectrically converting the light; arithmetically operating a number of signals in parallel obtained for each of the elements by the photoelectric conversion of the processing in the light reception step in accordance with a predetermined rule; outputting a result of the arithmetic operation of the processing in the arithmetic operation step for each of the elements; and adjusting a timing at which the result of the arithmetic operation is to be outputting for each of the plurality of elements by the processing in the outputting step. Applicant believes that the amendments to claim 1 and 6 do not introduce new matter and are fully supported in the specification, for example, in Figures 4 and 6 and the written description regarding same.

Applicant respectfully submits that *Kochi* fails to disclose or suggest a number of features of the claimed invention. For example, nowhere does *Kochi* disclose or suggest an arithmetic operation means that includes arithmetic operation units each of which arithmetically operates a signal obtained for one of the elements in the optical area as required by newly amended claims 1 and 6.

Further, Applicant believes that the Examiner has mischaracterized the teaching of *Kochi*. In this regard, the Examiner asserts that *Kochi* discloses "arithmetic operation means for arithmetically operating a signal obtained for each of the elements by the photoelectric conversion by the light reception means in accordance with a predetermined rule (Figure 19A, No. 50). See, Office Action, page 2.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's characterization of *Kochi*. Element 50 of Figure 19A in *Kochi* is merely an output device and <u>not</u> a unit for arithmetic operation. Indeed, *Kochi* provides no description whatsoever with respect to element 50 as an arithmetic operation means. See, *Kochi*, for example, column 15, lines 49-50. Therefore, Applicant believes that one skilled in the art viewing *Kochi* would not be inclined to modify *Kochi* to arrive at the claimed invention.

Based on the differences between *Kochi* and the claimed invention, Applicant believes that *Kochi* fails to disclose or suggest a number of features of the claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submit that *Kochi* fails to render obvious the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

3

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit reconsideration of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 1 and 6:

1.   (Amended)   An image processing apparatus having an optical area in which a plurality of elements are disposed in a matrix, comprising:

light reception means for receiving light introduced into said elements of said optical area and photoelectrically converting the light;

arithmetic operation means ~~for~~including a plurality of arithmetic operating units, each of which arithmetically operati~~ng~~es a signal obtained for ~~each~~one of said elements by the photoelectric conversion by said light reception means in accordance with a predetermined rule;

outputting means for outputting a result of the arithmetic operation of said arithmetic operation means for each of said elements; and

timing adjustment means for adjusting a timing at which the result of the arithmetic operation is to be outputted for each of said plurality of elements from said outputting means.

6.   (Amended)   An image processing method for an image processing apparatus which has an optical area in which a plurality of elements are disposed in a matrix, comprising:

a light reception step of receiving light introduced into said elements of said optical area and photoelectrically converting the light;

an arithmetic operation step of arithmetically operating a plurality of signals in parallel obtained for each of said elements by the photoelectric conversion of the processing in the light reception step in accordance with a predetermined rule;

an outputting step of outputting a result of the arithmetic operation of the processing in the arithmetic operation step for each of said elements; and

a timing adjustment step of adjusting a timing at which the result of the arithmetic operation is to be outputted for each of said plurality of elements by the processing in the outputting step.